



CURRENT HOT TOPICS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

**What State Special Education
Advisory Panel Members Need
to Know**

2012

-ONE-

COMMON CORE CURRICULUM

- Forty-seven States have signed on to a national common core curriculum. This will have a major impact on public schools and will require a shift in focus and a need for massive professional development.
- The change will help level the playing field and should help children who move or transfer to another school district or State.



COMMON CORE AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

- How will the common core impact services for children with disabilities? There will need to be an effort to incorporate common core content in the IEP process.
- Special education staff and parents will need information and training on this shift.
- Teacher training programs will need to get on board.
- States will need to ramp up professional development.



ASSESSMENTS

- States are in the process of developing common core assessment systems.
- States have several options regarding developing assessments.
- **The Advisory Panel needs to stay updated regarding common core issues relating to special education.**



-TWO-

SEQUESTRIAN CUTS

- The Budget Control Act of 2011 established a joint select committee in Congress charged with the task of developing a proposal to achieve at least \$1.2 trillion in deficit reduction. Unfortunately, they could not reach an agreement.

Opportunity Lost



SEQUESTRATION

- This failure triggered enforcement funding cuts, called sequestrations.

Forced Cuts



EXAMPLES

- Head Start would be cut by \$669 million.
- Title I would be cut by \$1.2 billion.
- IDEA would be cut by \$973 million.
- Cuts will impact services for children with disabilities.

Cuts could impact FAPE.



SOLUTIONS

- Congress must send the President a balanced deficit reduction plan before January 2013.
- Stakeholders should let their opinion be known to the congressional representatives.



-THREE-

FOCUS ON RESULTS

- Last year, the Office of Special Education Programs asked States to include a results component to the OSEP monitoring process.

Compliance ————— Results



FOCUS ON RESULTS

- As we speak, OSEP is developing a results-oriented monitoring process.



-FOUR-

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- Fiscal accountability in special education continues to be a very hot topic, both at the State and school district levels.

MOE

MOFE

Excess Costs



FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- Fiscal is part of the general supervision responsibility of the State Education Agency.



FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- All States will receive an OSEP fiscal monitoring between now and the end of the year. This will establish a fiscal baseline for all States.
- Fiscal issues are now impacting LEAs.
- Many States have reduced State special education funding and have asked for waivers from OSEP.



-FIVE-

ESEA WAIVERS

- “No Child Left Behind” is left behind. NCLB is a dying acronym. States have been allowed to submit ESEA waivers that, if approved, excuses them from NCLB requirements.

AYP

*Proficiency
by 2014*



ESEA WAIVER

- States must show in their waiver how they will have high accountability standards that show children are making progress as well as how States assist low performing schools. Focus is on individual schools.
- Major issue: When ESEA is reauthorized, federal accountability standards will apply.
- Waivers provide a good idea of what will be included in the new ESEA.



-SIX-

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFE SCHOOLS

- Safe schools is a hot topic because of incidents throughout the United States where children are bullied directly or become victims of cyber bullying.
- Safe schools and a positive school climate lead to better performance for children.



-SEVEN-

VIRTUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Largely because of advancement in technology, virtual education programs are being developed and offered throughout the world.



IDEA AND VIRTUAL EDUCATION

- IDEA was last reauthorized in 2004—eight years ago! Virtual special education was not an issue in 2004. The current regulations are silent on the issue.
- Advancements in technology have outpaced the IDEA regulations.
- Virtual school programs are popping up all over the country.



IDEA AND VIRTUAL EDUCATION

- How does the IEP team function?
- How are children evaluated?
- Who monitors progress?
- How does LRE work?
- What about related services?
- Who pays for the technology?
- Role of parents?



VIRTUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION

- There is a place for virtual special education:
 - Students with severe health issues
 - Students with extreme behavior issues
 - Students in rural and frontier areas



-EIGHT-

AUTISM

- The number of children with autism grows every year. This has created huge challenges for school districts.
- Autism is going from low to high incidence.
- There is a disagreement regarding methods in treating autism.



AUTISM

- Not all teachers have not been adequately trained to deal with students with autism or Asperger's. Lack of expertise has resulted in large numbers of complaints and due process hearings across the country.
- Teacher training programs and school districts need to provide professional development opportunities.



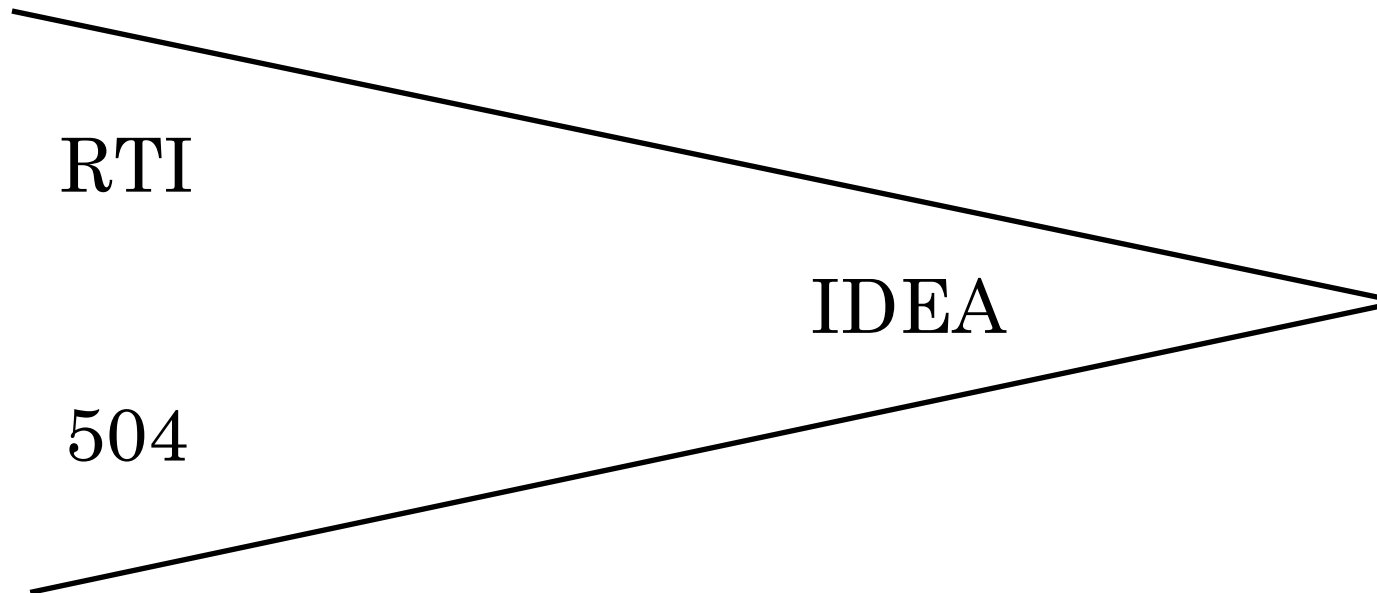
-NINE-

STUDENTS “AT RISK”

- Congress and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) have increased their focus on eligibility under 504/ADA. The ADA Amendments of 2009 strengthened the definition of an individual with a disability.
 - Increased major life activities
 - Lessened impact of mitigating measures
- Responsiveness to intervention is now addressing the needs of students at risk. Each State has their own version.
 - MTSS
 - General Education



STUDENTS SERVED



There needs to be a close collaboration between general education (RTI/504) and special education.



-TEN-

MENTAL HEALTH

- Our country does a fairly good job in addressing the needs of students with physical and health care needs. There is more stigma in relation to individuals with mental health issues.
- There are growing numbers of students with mental health problems and a need for services.



MENTAL HEALTH OPTIONS

- There is a drastic shortage of programs and services for students who need mental health interventions in and out of school.



MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATION

- There is a lack of collaboration and communication between different agencies that provide mental health services.
- Advisory Panels need information regarding mental health and students with disabilities.



ADVISORY PANEL

- Members need to be aware of the changing educational landscape and how these issues impact services for children with disabilities.



Thank you!

Questions?

